

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of all of the claims of the application. The status of the claims is as follows:

- Claims 1-42 are currently pending.
- Claims 5, 11, 13, 14, 27, 28, 34, and 35 are amended herein.

Support for the amendments is found in the specification, as originally filed, at least at page 20, lines 13-15; page 26, lines 17-18; page 27, lines 3-5; page 18, lines 18-24; and page 25, lines 8-14. The amendments submitted herein do not introduce any new matter.

Claims 7, 11, 13, 14, 27, and 34 Comply With § 112

The Office Action states that “[r]egarding claims 7, 11, 13, 14, 27, and 34, the phrases “maybe” and “should be” renders the claim indefinite because it is unclear whether the limitation(s) following the phrase are part of the claimed invention.” Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Nevertheless, for the sole purpose of expediting prosecution and without commenting on the propriety of the Office's rejections, Applicant herein amends claims 5, 11, 13, 14, 27, 34, and 35 as shown above to remove any language that includes the phrases “may be” or “should be.” While the Office mentions claim 7 in this rejection, claim 7 does not contain either of the phrases in question. Applicant respectfully submits that, as amended, claims 5, 11, 13, 14, 27, 34, and 35 each comply with 35 U.S.C. § 112.

Claims 1, 16, 28, and 35 Comply With § 112, 2nd Paragraph

Claims 1, 16, 28, and 35 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, ¶ 2, as allegedly being indefinite. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claims 1 and 35

Regarding claims 1 and 35, the Office states:

Claims 1 and 35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. It is unclear to the examiner how the amended claim 1 could be implemented since the centralized alert center is not directly associated with the alert source and since the alert source is configured to allow the user to subscribe directly to the alert source, what is the use of the centralized alert center if the user can connect directly to the alert source and if the alert source is not connect to the user nor to the alert source where is the connection and how the centralized alert center is communicating with the user and the alert source, on the fourth limitation the claim stated “subscribing by the centralized alert center on behalf of the user to the alert source”. If the user can connect to the alert source directly and if the centralized alert center is not connect to the alert source how the centralized alert center can connect on behalf of the user to the alert source. Clarification is required.

Applicant respectfully submits that, when read in light of the specification, claims 1 and 35 are not indefinite.

Regarding the Examiner's question of "since the alert source is configured to allow the user to subscribe directly to the alert source, what is the use of the centralized

alert center if the user can connect directly to the alert source," beginning at page 4, line 10, the specification states:

The current model of alert subscription and delivery has several dependability-related problems. First, most of the alerts today are delivered as e-mail messages, which are not suitable for delivering time-critical, high-importance alerts. Second, alert users usually require different timeliness and reliability levels for different categories of alerts. Most of today's alert services do not provide customizability at this finer granularity. Third, the above requirements may change over time. Since alerts from multiple sources may belong to the same category, having to visit multiple Web sites to modify or disable alert delivery mechanisms is a cumbersome task that greatly impacts the usability of alert services. Finally, to receive alerts as SMS (Short Message Service) messages on a cellular telephone, a user must supply the user's SMS e-mail address. Since the SMS e-mail address typically contains the corresponding cell phone number, providing this information to multiple alert services can create serious privacy concerns.

Another problem encountered with current alert systems is that they do not take into account system failures or other problems that may arise to prevent the delivery of an alert. This is a problem that can obviously be alleviated to some degree through redundant transmission of alerts. For example, each alert could be delivered as n duplicate e-mail messages and m duplicate SMS messages. However, such extreme redundancy would make the alert system irritating and cumbersome for practical use. The human factor must be assessed in deriving the appropriate trade-off between timeliness/reliability and usability.

Further usefulness of the centralized alert center is described in the paragraph beginning on page 5, line 24, which states (emphasis added):

Each user in the system has an alert center that is always online for receiving and acknowledging IM-alerts and has at least one e-mail address as a fallback mechanism. The alert center allows each user to easily customize the delivery system to suit the user's needs. All alerts are first directed to the alert center, which then determines the best way at that time to route the alerts to the user, based on the user's static and dynamic preference of dependability. **Since only the address or addresses of the alert center are revealed to the various alert sources, the user's privacy is greatly enhanced.**

As shown above, the Examiner states, "If the user can connect to the alert source directly and if the centralized alert center is not connect to the alert source how the centralized alert center can connect on behalf of the user to the alert source." Applicant respectfully points out that claims 1 and 35 do not state that the centralized alert center is "not connected" to the alert source. Rather, claim 1 recites, in part (emphasis added), "the centralized alert center is **not directly associated** with the alert source." As is clearly illustrated in Applicant's Fig. 3, the alert center 302 communicates with alert services 306 and 308 and with the user 304. This is further supported in the specification with reference to Fig. 3, which states (emphasis added):

The alert center 302 includes an e-mail program 324, an IM program 326 and a mapping module 328. The e-mail program and the IM program 326 are configured to **receive e-mail alerts and IM alerts, respectively, from the information alert services 306 and the personal alert sources 308.** The mapping module 328 is configured

by the user 304 to direct alerts received from various sources to an SMS address 330, an e-mail address 332 and/or an IM address 334.

In other words, the alert center receives alerts from alert sources, and then directs those alerts to one or more addresses associated with the user. As an example, this enables the user to specify multiple addresses for receiving alerts, even though a particular alert source may only support sending an alert to a single user-specified address.

Furthermore, as described in the specification with reference to Fig. 3, the alert center provides various advantages over the user subscribing directly to the various alert sources. Example statements from the specification include:

- The mapping module 328 is configured by the user 304 to direct alerts received from various sources to an SMS address 330, an e-mail address 332 and/or an IM address 334.
- In one implementation, the user 304 designates alert sources as being in certain categories in the mapping module 328. For example, there may be a category for financial alerts, a category for news, a category for sales, etc. The user 304 assigns a delivery method for this category (SMS, e-mail, IM) according to the importance of the alert.
- It is noted that there may be multiple delivery methods (e.g., Instant Messaging, SMS Messaging and/or e-Mail) assigned to a category. In such case, one delivery method is designated as a primary delivery method and another delivery method is designated as a secondary, or backup, delivery method.
- If the primary delivery method is unavailable or fails to deliver the alert, the alert is delivered via the secondary delivery method, and so on.
- To provide greater reliability, the centralized alert delivery system 300 is configured to use acknowledgements tagged with IM message sequence

numbers to verify that the user 304 has obtained an alert. This is an improvement over existing IM messaging services that gives hints as to whether a user (receiver) is on the other end of a communication and is able to see and respond to an incoming IM message.

The foregoing are merely examples provided to aid the Office's understanding, and should not be used to limit the claims in any way. Based at least on the various examples provided from the specification, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1 and 35 comply with 35 U.S.C. § 112, ¶ 2, and respectfully requests that the Office withdraw the rejection of claims 1 and 35.

Claim 16

Regarding claim 16, the Office states:

Claim 16 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. It is unclear to the examiner how the amended claim 16 could be implemented since the centralized alert center is only an intermediary and is not directly associated with the alert source and since the alert source is configured to allow the user to subscribe directly to the alert source, what is the use of the centralized alert center if the user can connect directly to the alert source and if the alert source is not connect to the user nor to the alert source where is the connection and how the centralized alert center is communicating with the user and the alert source, If the user can connect to the alert source directly and if the centralized alert center is not connect to the alert source how the centralized alert center can connect on behalf of the user to the alert source. Clarification is required.

Applicant respectfully submits that the same support given above for claims 1 and 35 also applies equally to support claim 16. Furthermore, claim 16, itself, provides a statement as to the purpose of the centralized alert delivery system, stating in part (emphasis added):

the centralized alert delivery system is configured as an intermediary that enables a user to direct the centralized alert delivery system to subscribe to receive alerts directly from the multiple alert sources on behalf of the user, **thereby enabling the user to receive alerts from the alert source without providing any user contact information to the alert source**

Based at least on the various examples provided from the specification, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 16 complies with 35 U.S.C. § 112, ¶ 2, and respectfully requests that the Office withdraw the rejection of claim 16.

Claim 28

Regarding claim 28, the Office states:

Claim 28 as amended is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The claimed alert source is stored in the memory of the user computer it is unclear to the examiner on how the subscription layer can receive a request from a user to subscribe to a particular alert source on behalf of the user, wherein the alert source is not directly affiliated with the alert source, how and from where the request is received, if the user is

subscribing to an alert source who is the “on behalf of the user” can work in the claim, furthermore clarification is need to the “subscribe the to particular alert source on behalf of the user”. Clarification is required.

Applicant respectfully submits that the same support given above for claims 1 and 35 also applies equally to support claim 28. Fig. 3 provides a clear illustration of the communication paths that exist between the alert sources, the centralized alert center, and the user devices. Based at least on the various examples provided from the specification, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 28 complies with 35 U.S.C. § 112, ¶ 2, and respectfully requests that the Office withdraw the rejection of claim 28.

Conclusion

For at least the foregoing reasons, all pending claims are in condition for allowance. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and prompt issuance of the application.

If any issues remain that would prevent allowance of this application, **Applicant requests that the Examiner contact the undersigned representative before issuing a subsequent Action.**

Respectfully Submitted,

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